

THE SONG OF THE SAW.

With careworn face and a ragged coat
That flapped in the wintry blast,
An old man stood by a log of wood,
And his saw was flying fast.
His saw was flying fast,
And the air with its music rang,
And tuning his throat to the dissonant note
This mournful song he sang:
"Saw! saw! saw!
In cold, in heat, and in rain,
Till every stroke in the seasoned oak
Seems tearing into my brain.
The coat on my back is old,
My home is a hovel poor,
And my saw I run from sun till sun,
To keep the wolf from the door."
"Saw! saw! saw!
Through knots and knarls I go,
And my breath comes quick as the log grows thick
And the saw runs heavy and slow.
Oh, you in your cosy rooms,
With all that your hearts desire,
Tis not the wood, but human blood,
You're burning upon the fire."
"Saw! saw! saw!
Forever the whole day long,
And at night it seems that my torturing dreams
Are filled with the grating song
The log is a human life,
My saw is the course of time,
And every stroke in the seasoned oak
Is a year from a wasting prime;
And as I near the bark,
More swiftly my saw does run,
Till the billet drops, and then it stops
Like time when life is done."
"Saw! saw! saw!
How long is the weary day
Till the sun has set, and I sadly get
At night my paltry pay.
Tis, oh, to be a horse
In my rich employer's stall
If I must toil, and sweat, and moil,
To earn a cup of gall;
And the best of food has he,
While scant is my share of the hardest fare,
And nobody cares for me."
Saw! saw! saw!
And shrinking before the blast,
An old man stood by a pile of wood,
And his saw was flying fast,
His saw was flying fast,
And the wind was biting and raw,
And still as he severed the logs in two,
Oh, would that the world his misery knew,
He sang the "Song of the Saw."

Albert B. Paine.

PLAYING AT CIRCUS.

Mr. Biggs was sauntering around the Union Depot as the evening train came in from Buffalo, when surprised with:

"Why, Biggs! How are you, old fellow?"
"Well, if it ain't Jack Duncan! Glad to see you. Come right along home with me."
"No, Biggs, I'm too dirty. Been snowed in on the road; helped shovel snow, slept in a bar-room; haven't had a change of shirts for a week."
"Never mind appearances, nobody at the house. My wife took the three p. m. for an all night with her sister in Painesville. I'll furnish a shirt, and I've got a fine bath-room in the house. Come, now; you haven't honored me since I married."

"Well, since the wife is away I'll surrender. We'll have a regular rooster night of it."
Jack Duncan is a bachelor, with a holy horror of women. Feminine presence paralyzes and stupefies him.

"Here's the linen," showing him into the bathroom a few minutes later. "There's the bath all ready. Now shape up while I go down to Joe Richards's and order up one of our old college lunches. Nobody in the house; so just splash around at pleasure."

Biggs departed, leaving the door ajar. Jack did not notice it in his eagerness for emersion.

He had just tumbled out and resumed his pantalons when he heard footsteps approaching the door. Thinking it was Biggs returning he seized the freshly laundered shirt, opening at the back, and jammed his head into it. It came down over his face, completely blindfolding him, and the starch baffled his efforts to tunnel through.

Just as he commenced straddling around with suspenders dangling, he heard a rustle that congealed his blood. The door squeaked, and a cherry voice said:

"Now I've got you Mr. Biggs. The train left me, so I made a call or two and came back. I heard you playing sea lion in the bath-room as I entered the house; I got the buggy whip and slipped up to pay you back for everlastingly teasing me. Now, I'm ring master, dear hubby. Move lively!" And she popped her whip in a business way that suspended the bachelor's animation. The shirt hid his face, and, taking his silence for a spousal submission to the joke, she began:

"Gentleman and ladies: Mademoiselle Biggs, queen of the sawdust arena, will now introduce her handsome and perfectly trained trick mule, Hubby Darling. He will walk the arena on his hind feet with his head and forepaws shrouded in a linen canopy. Come now, Hubby! Hoop la! hoop la!" she chirped, fetching him a wipe with the whip that hid his bare feet spunk the floor like a dog dancer.

"Limber up Hubby! Lively now. Up, up, up," and she underscored the last "up" with a briar cut, making Hubby Darling skip so impulsively that his dangle dangle suspender swished about like a donkey's tail, and his hands dove instinctively to the preservation of his unstayed pantalons.

"I blindfolded Hubby Darling to prevent him climbing the center-pole. He's the trickiest donkey that cavitates the magic circle. The peerless prance of the canvas pavilion. Hoop la! (Zip she takes him.) What beautiful action! Yet, fellow-countrymen, I never curried him down with anything but this silk-blossomed snapper. Hoop la! (Popkerslash.)

"I cover his ears that he may not offend the most fastidious; they resemble a cross between a mail bag and the human appendage. Hoop la! (Zip, zip.) Let the Golden Cornet Band dish up Fisher's Hornpipe red-hot and highly flavored, and Hubby Darling shall—"

"B-b-beg your pardon, m-madam," spluttered the victim, as his head and voice shot out of the shirt. Then—

She started, stopped,
Spell-bound, amazed;
The whip she dropped,
And then she raised
A Cherokee shriek
And down she flopped.

But the terrified sufferer caught her gallantly in his arms, just as Biggs rushed in with—
"Jack, are you drowning? Great heavens! my wife!"

"Take her Biggs. I'm tucked out. Awkward predicament—"

"Explain yourself instantly, sir! You half dressed, my wife in your arms!" and he bristled all over like a barbed wire fence.

"Hold on, Biggs; I've got about all I can stand. Let me get my clothes on and I'll go where men are not martyrs. Your wife thought I was—"

"Hubby, darling—oh, that blindfold!" murmured the queen of the arena, half consciously.
"Hear that, sir! What's that about blindfold?"

"I got stuck in that confounded shirt. Your wife took me for—"

"The Peerless Prancer of the Arena. Hoop la!" gasped the queen, rousing a little.

"Merciful heavens! Hear that raving! You've dethroned my wife's reason. Oh, base ingrate! Don't leave this house at the peril of your life. You shall—"

"Dance the sawdust on his hind feet," muttered the queen convulsively.

"My poor wife! I will avenge your wrongs," groaned Biggs, chafing her limbs agonizingly.

"My head was fast in the shirt. She couldn't see my face and thought it was you," shrieked the tortured, hoarsely.

"Very likely! Be a man, sir. Don't shrink from the punishment of your treachery!"

"Where am I? Is it a dream?" mused the queen, opening her optics and glaring wildly.

"What has that villain done?" demanded Biggs fiercely.

She hitched on at once.

"Oh, mercy! It is no dream. He did nothing. Take me to my room. Oh, husband how could you be so careless!"

"Don't go, Jack; maybe I've made a zebra of myself; stay now till the fog rises; and he bore his waited wife away.

An hour later they sat around a marvelous supper, Biggs made a second trip to order. They held their sides and shrieked and repeated the points of the episode, again and again.

Jack is christened "Hubby Darling." He sighs for more marriage felicity.

When Biggs wants to silence his wife he snaps his fingers and pipes—Hoop la!"

GREAT GUNS!

A dispatch from Yokohama, August 12, reports the arrival at Shanghai, in charge of British officers, of the new alphabetical gun-boats, the *Jota*, *Kappa*, and *Lambda*. Eleven of these vessels have been sent out thus far, and two more are to be delivered, or thirteen altogether, built by Sir W. Armstrong & Co. The last two are an improvement on the others, and of them *Broad Arrow* says: "The Italian monster ironclads are of 11,000 tons displacement, and the *Infante* weighs upwards of 10,000 tons, and yet we find a little gun-vessel of 1,350 tons ranking but second to them in regard to the penetrative power of the guns carried. There is not an unarmored ship afloat that could cope with these little Chinese gun-vessels. With a speed of sixteen knots, which could be maintained for nearly a week, and a turning power enabling them to steam in a circle of 150 yards radius, these little vessels could choose their own range, and while discharging shells at a comparatively large target would be themselves practically without the range of the guns with which our unarmored vessels are armed. Until very recently the Admiralty conception of a fit armament for our largest unarmored frigates, such as the *Duchante* class, was a battery of 64-pounders mounted on truck carriages. But here we have an unarmored gun-vessel carrying two 26-ton 10-inch breech-loaders, besides other guns, and fitted with a steel knife-edged ram. All the machinery and magazines are below water, and further protected by a steel deck—the vessels are built of steel. They are divided into a great number of water-tight compartments, and in which coal is stored, and they carry enough coal to enable them to steam at a speed of eight knots per hour for four weeks continuously, or a total distance of rather more than 6,000 miles."

Each of these heavy guns commands a nearly all-round fire. The charge of the guns is 150 pounds of powder, and the weight of the projectile 400 pounds, the penetrative power equal to piercing 18 inches of solid, unbacked iron plate. They carry besides in each four 40-pounder breech-loading guns, two Nordenfeldts, and four Gatlings, and furthermore two steam cutters fitted with spar torpedoes. Their superior speed and greater range and power of artillery would enable them to in some measure cope with an iron-clad, since they could ordinarily choose their own distance, and from their diminutiveness would be very hard to hit; nor would a single shot by any means disable them, owing to the under-water and other protection given to their vital parts. China went to England for her gunboats, but now goes to Germany for iron-clads of larger types. A shipbuilding firm, which had already one armored corvette for China on the stocks, has just received an order for another of the same class.

THIS, THAT, AND THE OTHER.

An old man with a head as ditto of hair as a watermelon entered an Aus in avenue drug store, and told the clerk he wanted a bottle of hair restorer. "What kind of hair restorer do you prefer?" "I reckon I'll have to take a bottle of red hair restorer. That was the color it used to be when I was a boy."—*Alec Sweet.*

The man who sits down on the road to success and waits for a free ride will get left.—*Whitehall Times.* And the man who jumps on the tail-board of some one else's success will be greeted with a cry of "whip behind!"—*New Haven Register.* And he who drives another man's success will be forgotten in the rush and hurry to give glory and honor to the favorite.—*Stoughtonville Herald.*

And he who is success full is apt to bubble over.—*NATIONAL TRIBUNE.*

Deathbed repentance is burning the candle of life in the service of the devil, then blowing the snuff in the face of heaven.—*Lorenzo Dow.*

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TURNING THE TABLES.

A whale was recently stranded on an outlying point of the island of Walls, Orkney. Glorifying in their prize, inhabitants of all ages and both sexes hastened to the spot with knives, pitchforks, clubs, and what ever other weapons they could lay their hands on, and began to cut, stab, slash, and maul the monster. At length, when their victim was pronounced to be dead, they fastened ropes to the prize and began to tow it into the harbor on the rising tide. Suddenly the whale, feeling his native element about him, made a bold dash for liberty and rushed out to sea, dragging the fleet of screaming arcanians in their boats behind him. Not until they had been towed three miles did the captured captors succeed in cutting the ropes and saving themselves and their boats from shipwreck.

"ANTS."

O, those tiny little ants,
How they clamber up our pants
At the picnic 'neath the willows in the glen.
How they seem to take delight in
The obnoxious sport of bitin'
Indefensible and modest gentlemen.
How delightful when one's cooling
To the maiden one is wooing.
To feel those playful creatures in his pants,
Till he breathes an awful swear
Upon the perfumed air.
At the sisters and the cousins and the ants.

How it sets one's soul a throbbing
To feel those insects hobnobbing
Up and down his system in their merry glee;
And there's one way he can right 'em,
But that is to flee and flight 'em
'Neath the shadow of some distant friendly tree.
—The Brandon Union.

Answers to Correspondents.

We are obliged to answer certain inquiries of the same nature in each issue of our paper. While we cheerfully furnish information to subscribers in this column, we suggest that much labor, time, and expense may be saved both to ourselves and to our correspondents, if the latter and other subscribers would keep a file of the paper. They could then, at any time, turn to the file and probably find the very inquiry answered about which they would have written to us. We trust that each and every subscriber will profit by this suggestion.

J. B. UTICA, N. Y.—Any information with reference to our National Cemeteries will be given by addressing Quartermaster's Department U. S. Army, Washington, D. C.

J. G. B. NATICK, MASS.—Camp Butler, Illinois, was located some eight or ten miles from Springfield. It was a depot for recruits and rebel prisoners.

M. D. NASHUA, N. H.—We cannot promise, in advance, to publish any notice—it must first be examined.

J. B. TRENTON, N. J.—The information you seek will be found in another part of our paper, a copy of which we send you.

L. C. D. ELMIRA, N. Y.—The Soldiers' Home, near this city, is only intended for soldiers who have been in the Regular army.

H. A. L. RACINE, WIS.—The rate of pension for a disability incapacitating for any manual labor was, up to June 6, 1866, 88 a month; from that date to June 4, 1872, it was \$20 a month; and from the last date and at present, \$24 a month. The phrase "any manual labor," which occurs in the law, is construed to include the lighter kinds of labor requiring education and skill.

O. O. NEWARK, N. J.—A homestead may be located by an ex-soldier or sailor through an agent, but at the expiration of six months the principal himself must locate and commence cultivation; otherwise all claim to the tract will be forfeited.

G. B. R. NEWARK, O.—The Equalization Bounty Bill proposes to grant a bounty of eight and one-third dollars a month for each month of actual service, deducting all United States bounty already received. Multiply 83 by the number of months you served, and from the product subtract the amount of bounty you have received—the remainder, if any, will show you the amount to which you will be entitled if the said bill becomes a law.

J. F. HOLYOKE, MASS.—Claims are not allowed in rotation. For instance, claim No. 263,604 may be allowed before claim No. 194,295.

D. W. PITTSBURG, PA.—Q. What is meant by "Revised Homesteads" under section 2306 of the Revised Statutes? A. An "Additional Homestead," under section 2306 Revised Statutes, is made and allowed in cases where a person who was a soldier in the rebellion for not less than ninety days, and who, having been honorably discharged, did, on and before June 22, 1864, make a homestead for less than 160 acres. Under this section 2306 he is allowed to make an additional entry for the amount of difference between the area of the original homestead and 160 acres. If he does not choose to make the entry in person and at once, he can have a certificate of his right made by the General Land Office, this city, and the paper covered by the certificate is called an "Approved Additional Homestead Right."

R. W. P. YORK, PA.—You should address the Surgeon-General of the Army, Washington, D. C., in regard to the matter referred to in your letter.

N. E. DESMOINES, IOWA.—The Government furnishes headstones for the graves of all soldiers who died during or since the late war, upon application for same by relatives or friends. Address the Quartermaster-General of the Army, this city.

G. S. PORTLAND, OR.—The pension granted to a discharged soldier during his lifetime cannot be increased after his death.

W. J. QUEBEC, CAN.—One commissioned officer or two enlisted men are required in a pension claim to corroborate claimant's statement as to the time when, places where, and circumstances under which the alleged disability was contracted.

T. V. ATLANTA, GA.—Claims for property taken by the United States Army, in States not in insurrection during the late war, if filed prior to January 1, 1880, can be prosecuted and collected upon the necessary proof being adduced.

J. B. C. TROY, N. Y.—We cannot advise or suggest to ex-soldiers and sailors in what portion of the United States they will find the most desirable lands on which to locate their homesteads, but we advise them to write to the Commissioner of the General Land Office here and he will send all who seek information on the subject a pamphlet telling all about our public lands.

D. R. B. BURLINGTON, IOWA.—Up to a recent date a deserter at large from the *volunteer* service could obtain a dishonorable discharge, and by thus having his military record completed, obtain a pension if entitled thereto; but ex-Secretary of War Ramsey, just before retiring from the War Office, issued an order to the effect that no discharges in such cases should be issued. The Commissioner of Pensions has now the matter of allowing pension in this class of cases under consideration, and we will make known his decision when rendered. The above refers to those who have never received a final discharge. We would, however, advise all such to apply, as they will no doubt eventually have title.

*Remaining answers next week.

SOME NATURAL HISTORY.

BY JOSH BILLINGS.

FLEAS.—The smallest animal of the brute creation, and the most pesky, is the flea.

They are about the bigness of an onion seed, and shine like a bran new shot.

They spring from low places, and can spring further and faster than any of the bug brutes.

They bite wuss than the musketeer, for the bite on the run; one flea will go all over a man's suburbs in 2 minutes, and leave him as freckled as the meazles.

It is impossible to do